

# Rim of the Valley Corridor Special Resource Study

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Department of the Interior



## Rim of the Valley Corridor Special Resource Study Update: **Preliminary Findings and Alternative Concepts**

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*Fall, 2012*



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## Background – What is a special resource study?

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- Authorized by Congress
- Criteria for eligibility as a new NPS unit
- Report back to Congress

*Note: Implementation only happens if Congress takes action*





# Rim of the Valley Corridor Special Resource Study

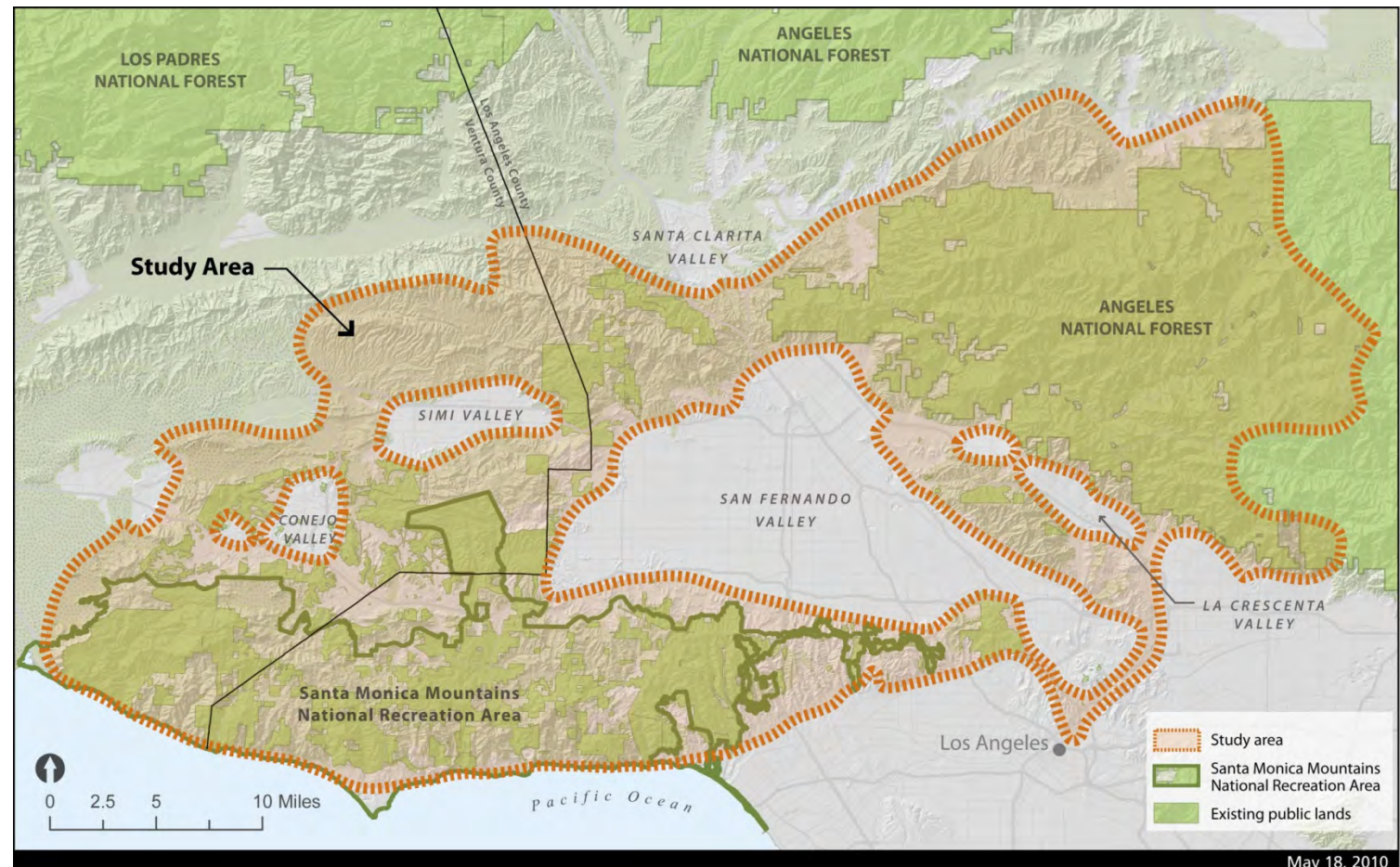
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## Background - Why is the NPS Conducting this Study?

Study authorized by Congress in 2008 - Complete a special resource study of:

*“the area known as the Rim of the Valley Corridor, including the mountains encircling the San Fernando, La Crescenta, Santa Clarita, Simi, and Conejo Valleys...”*



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## Background – What will the study evaluate?

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1. **Eligibility as a new unit** of the national park system
2. **Boundary adjustment** to add study area to Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area
3. **Other opportunities** for protection and interpretation of the area



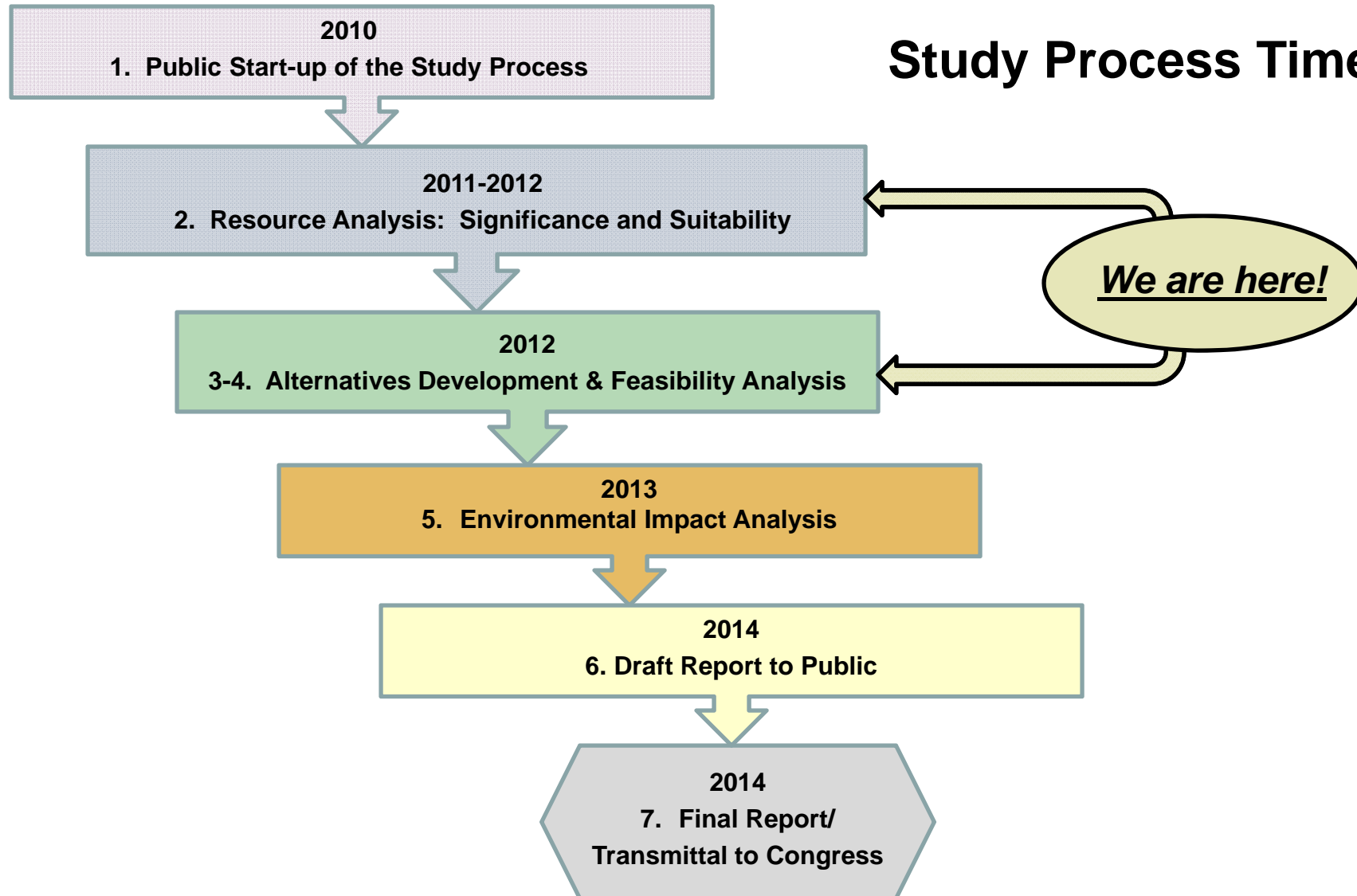


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## Study Process Timeline



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## Results of Scoping – What We Heard from You

### Public Scoping June - October, 2010

- Conserve connectivity and wildlife corridors
- Concern about threats to connectivity and natural resource protection – urgency
- Complete the Rim of the Valley Trail system
- Public interest in an expanded NPS role in the study area
- Many comments suggested expanding the study area to include corridor to Los Padres NF
- Some concern about private property



Los Angeles River Center



Calabasas Workshop



Altadena-break out group



Tujunga: Check-in Table



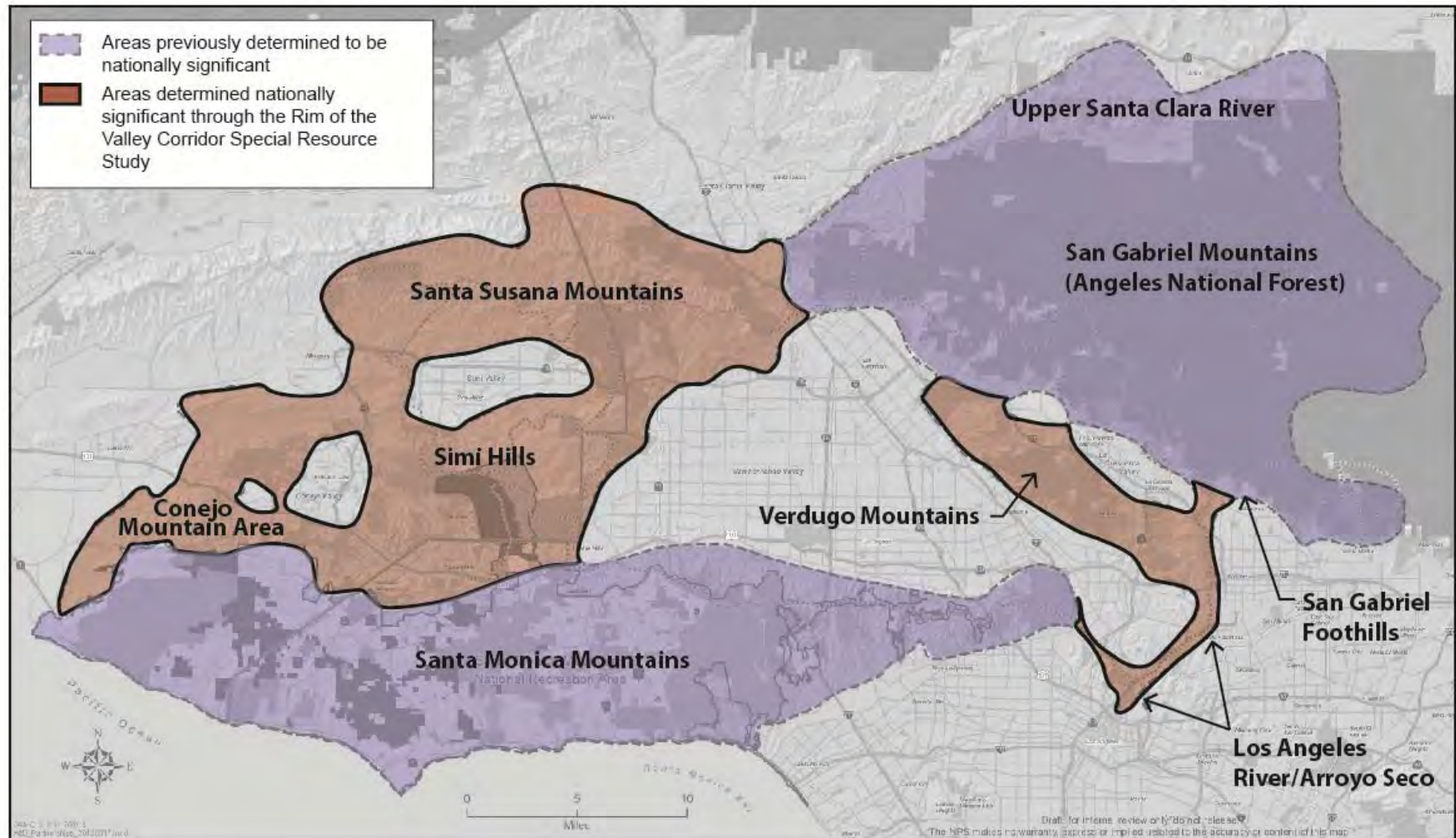
Chatsworth-Presentation

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## Preliminary Study Findings – Significant Resources





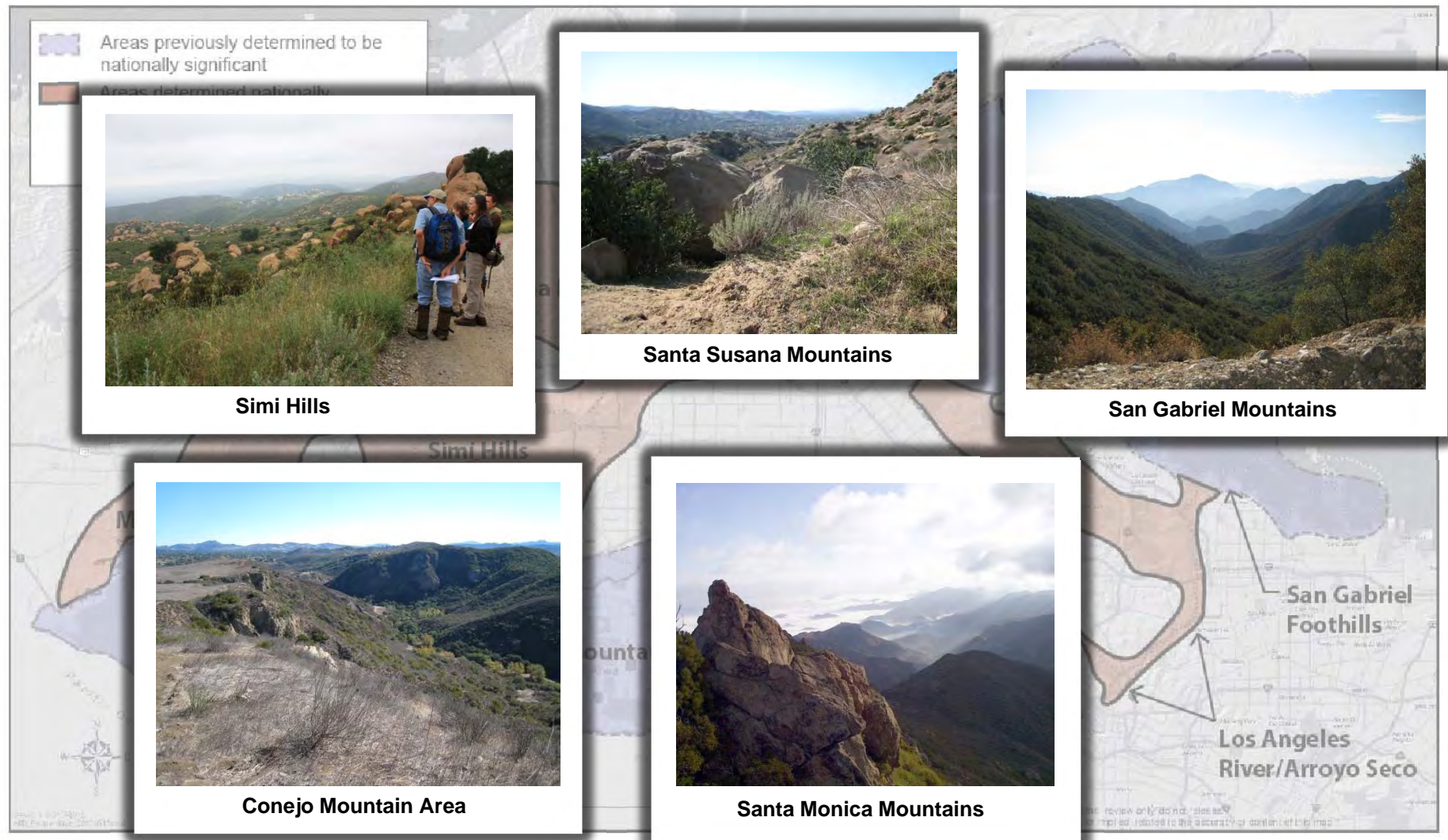
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## Preliminary Study Findings – Significant Resources

### Mountain Building and Diverse Geology of the Transverse Ranges Province





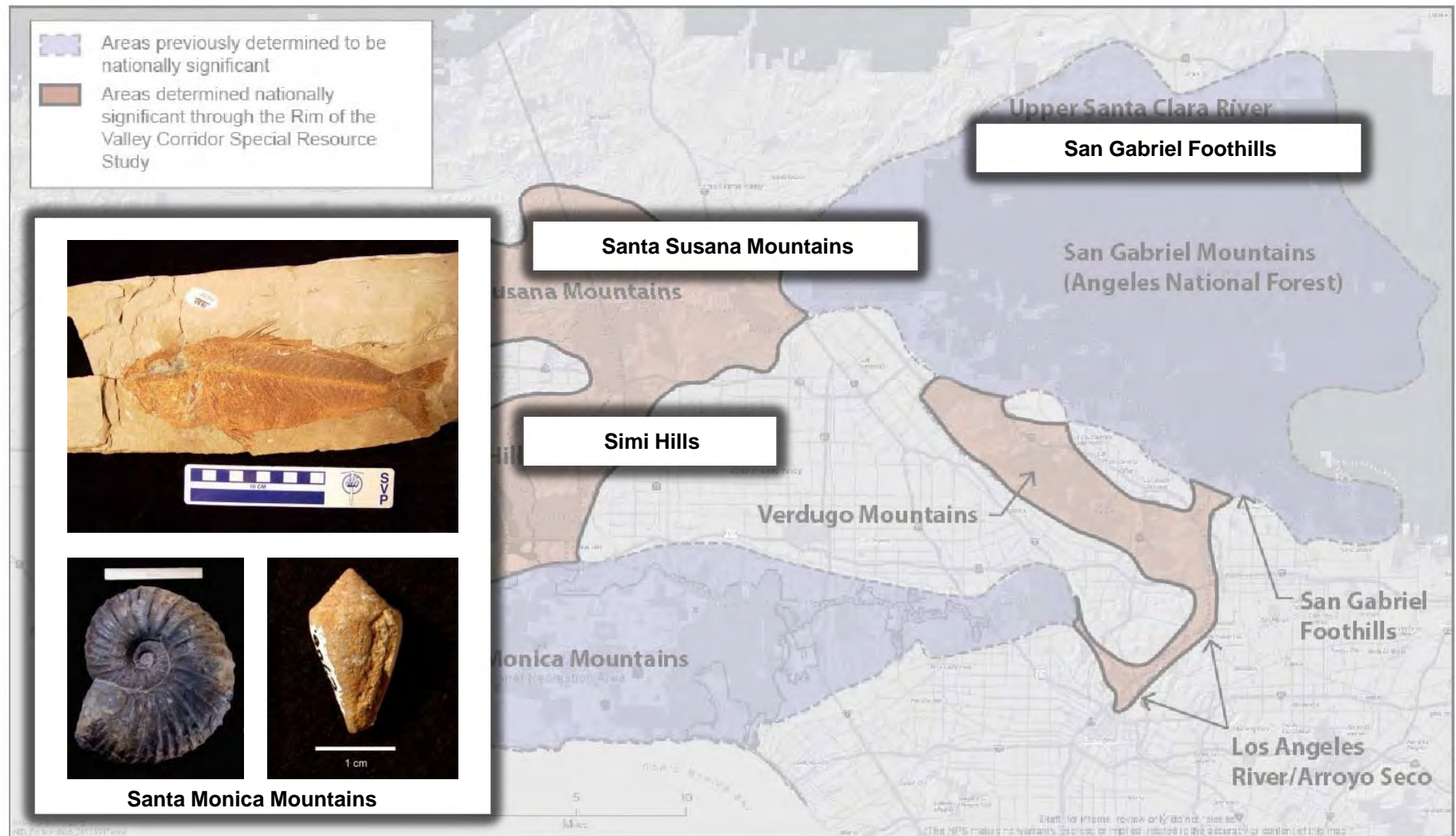
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## Preliminary Study Findings – Significant Resources

### Diverse Assemblage of Paleontological Resources



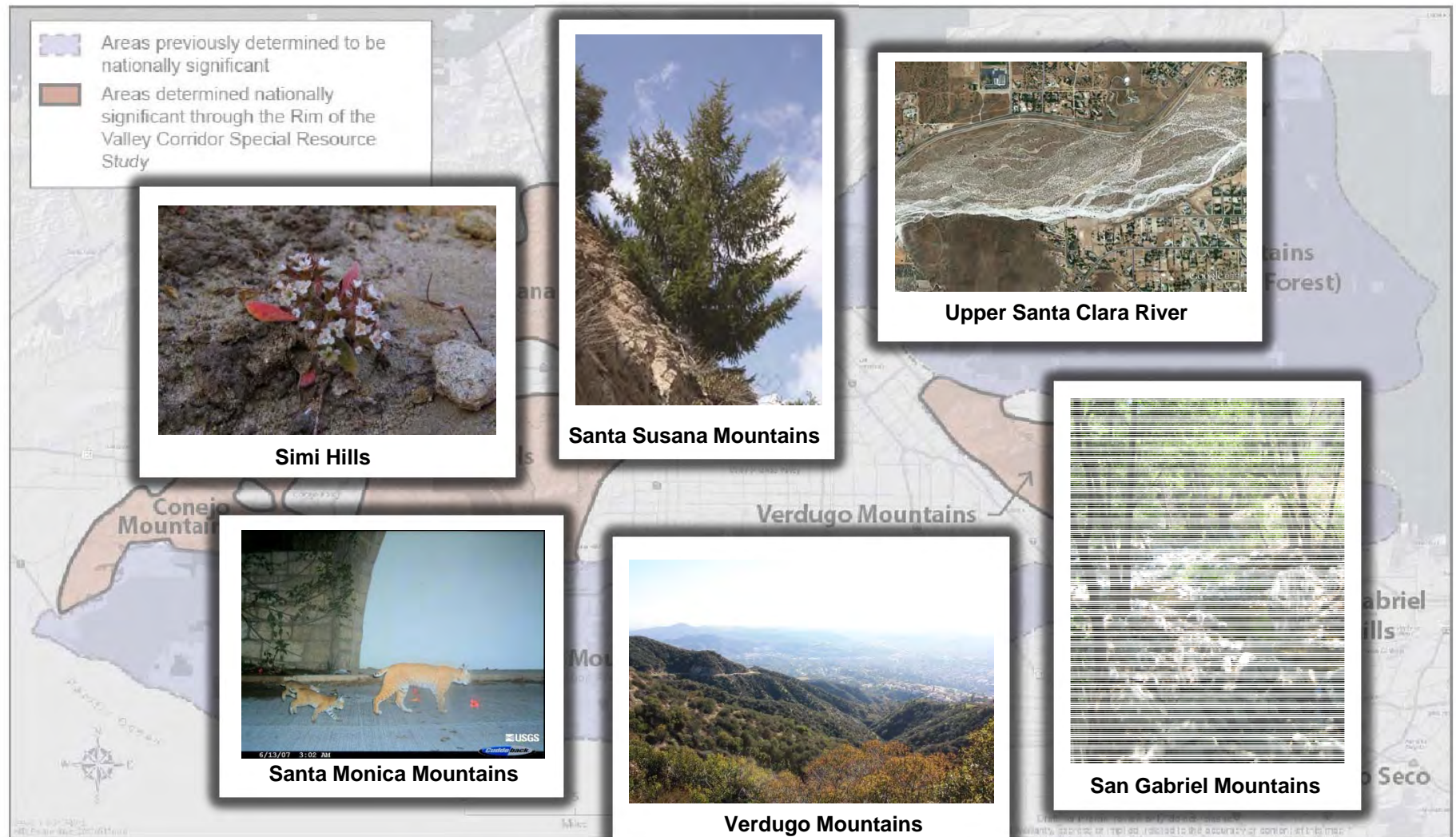
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## Preliminary Study Findings – Significant Resources

### High Levels of Biodiversity





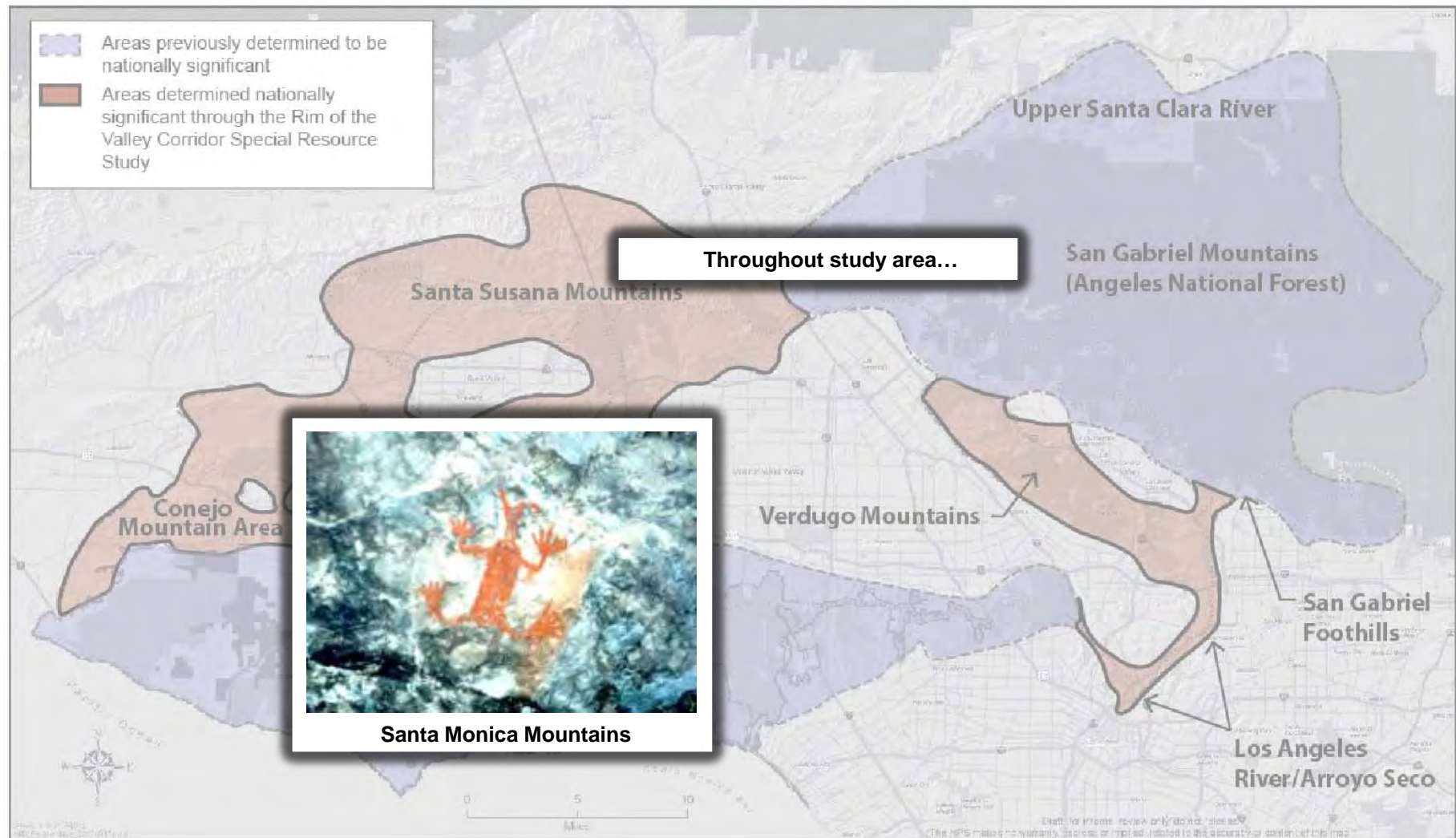
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## Preliminary Study Findings – Significant Resources

### Archeological Resources





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## Preliminary Study Findings – Significant Resources

### Historical Resources – National Historic Landmarks

-  Areas previously determined to be nationally significant
-  Areas determined nationally significant through the Rim of the Valley Corridor Special Resource Study



**Santa Susana Mountains –  
Pico Well No. 4**



**Santa Monica Mountains –  
Saddle Rock Ranch Pictograph Site**



**Santa Monica Mountains-  
Eames House**



**Arroyo Seco – The Rose Bowl**



**Arroyo Seco – Gamble House**



**Arroyo Seco –  
JPL, Space Flight Operations Facility**



**San Gabriel Mountains –  
Mount Wilson Observatory**



**Arroyo Seco  
JPL, 25-ft Space Simulator**



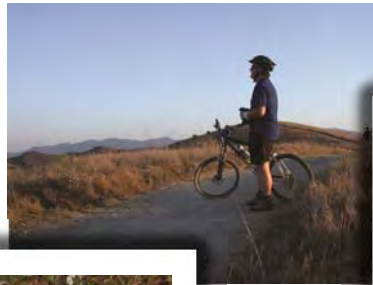
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## Preliminary Study Findings – Public Enjoyment

### Interpretation & Education - Expanded Recreation Opportunities



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## Preliminary Study Findings – Feasibility

### Feasibility Factors:

- Landownership
- Costs
- Access
- Threats to the resource

***Approaches to protection of significant resources must be feasible...***





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## Preliminary Study Findings

1. The study area contains **nationally significant resources** and offers opportunities to expand **public enjoyment** for the Los Angeles metropolitan area.
2. **Partnership-based** and **boundary adjustment approaches** would be feasible approaches to protecting significant resources in the study area and for long-term protection of resources at Santa Monica Mountains NRA.
3. A **new unit** of the national park system would be more costly and less feasible than expanding partnership authorities or expanding existing Santa Monica Mountains NRA park operations.





## Preliminary Alternative Concepts - Introduction

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- Based on preliminary findings that a new stand alone national park unit is less feasible than adding the area to SMMNRA
- These are preliminary ideas
- Developed with input from the public scoping comments and various land managing agencies
- Reflect what we believe can be feasible for NPS and other organizations





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## Preliminary Alternative Concepts – Common to All

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- Angeles National Forest managed by the USFS with NPS partnering through Service First Authority
- SMMNRA conservation approach
- Partner to develop a common base of scientific information for use in management decisions
- Rim of the Valley Trail - NPS support through partnerships and technical assistance - eligible as National Recreation Trail once completed
- NPS land acquisition only from willing sellers - no new NPS regulatory authority over private land or non-NPS public lands



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## Preliminary Alternative Concepts

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Range of alternatives that we will discuss:

**A: Continuation of Current Management (No Action Alternative)**

**B: Cooperative Conservation Partnership**

**C: Connecting Urban Communities: SMMNRA Boundary Adjustment**

**D: Connecting Natural Habitat: SMMNRA Boundary Adjustment**





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## Alternative A: Continuation of Current Management (No Action)

- SMMNRA would continue to be managed collaboratively to protect significant resources and provide public enjoyment opportunities
- There would be no new role for the NPS in the Rim of the Valley Corridor area.
- Management of areas beyond the current park boundary would continue to be conducted by existing managers and landowners







## Alternative B: Cooperative Conservation Partnership

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### Concept

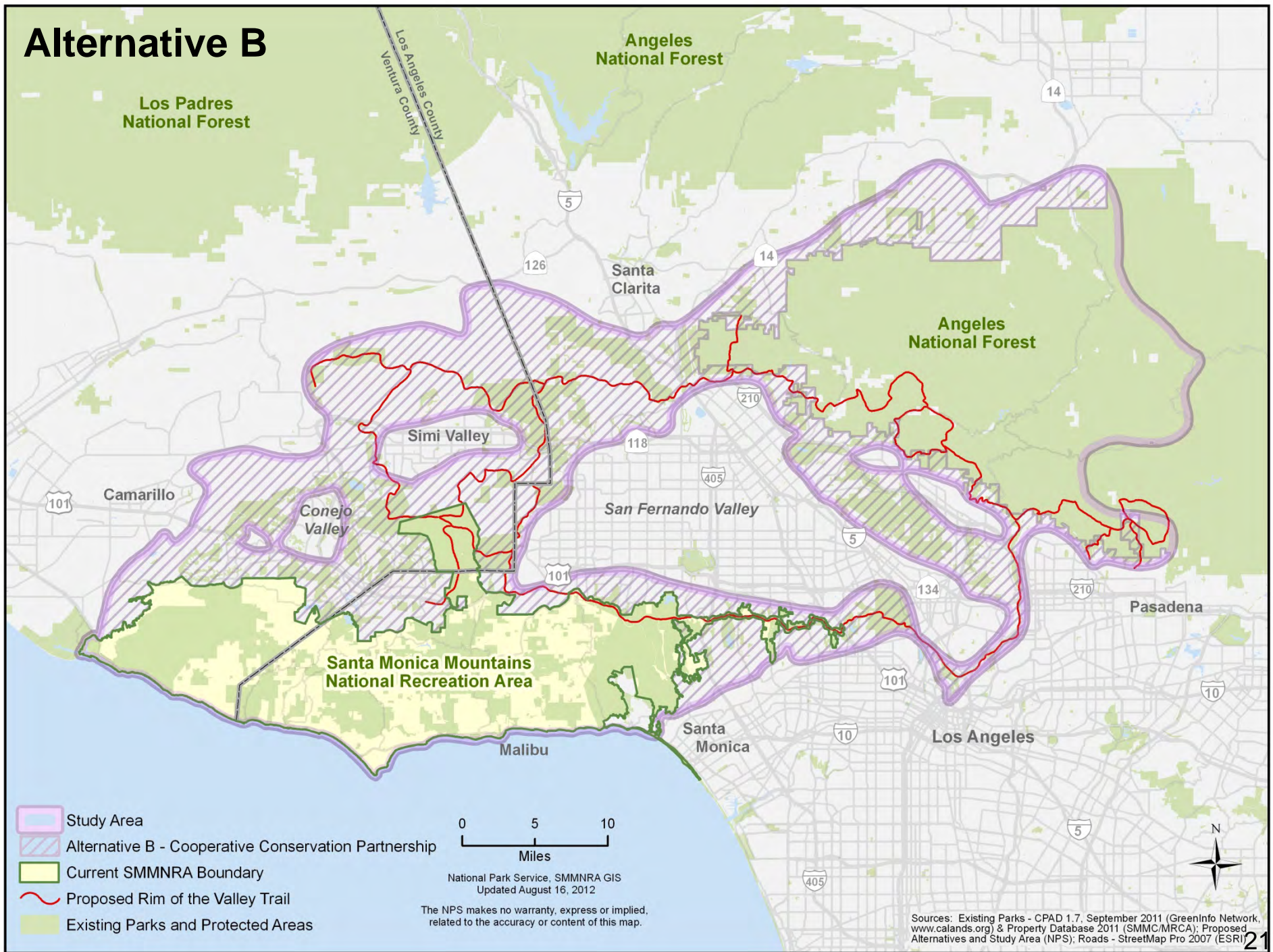
Extend the current ability of SMMNRA to partner and coordinate with other land managers, landowners, and others to protect and expand open spaces in the Rim of the Valley Corridor without expanding the existing park boundary.

Congress would direct SMMNRA to lead an effort to develop a cooperative conservation plan.





# Alternative B



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## Alternative C: Connecting Urban Parks - SMMNRA Boundary Adjustment

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### Concept

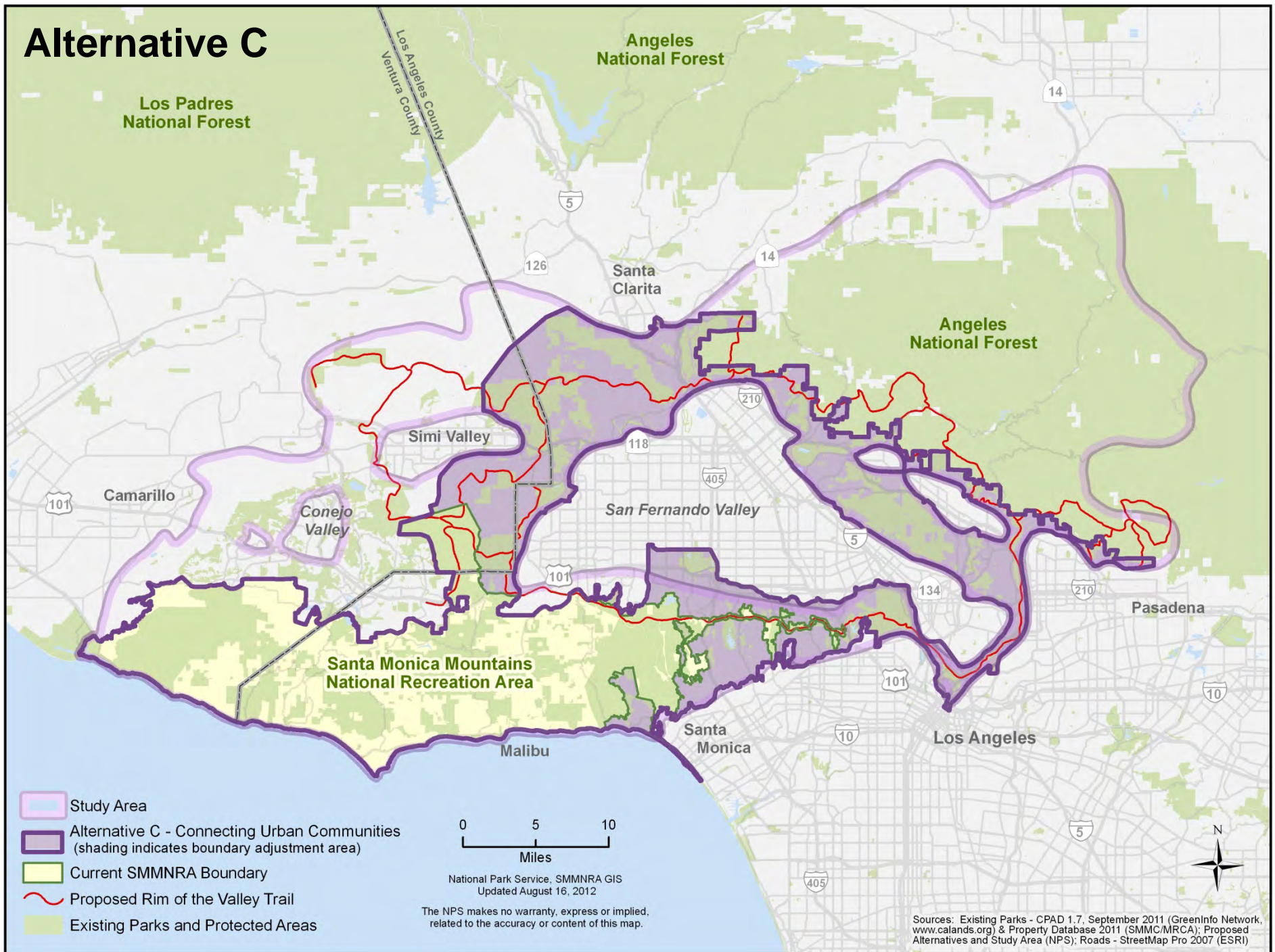
- Boundary adjustment focused on providing more recreation opportunities and better connections and access for a broad range of urban audiences.
- Includes the portions of the study area that border the most populous areas of the Los Angeles region.

*Would provide more close-to-home opportunities for recreation and enjoyment of the study area's resources and portals to national park experiences.*





# Alternative C



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## Alternative D: Connecting Natural Habitat – SMMNRA Boundary Adjustment

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### Concept

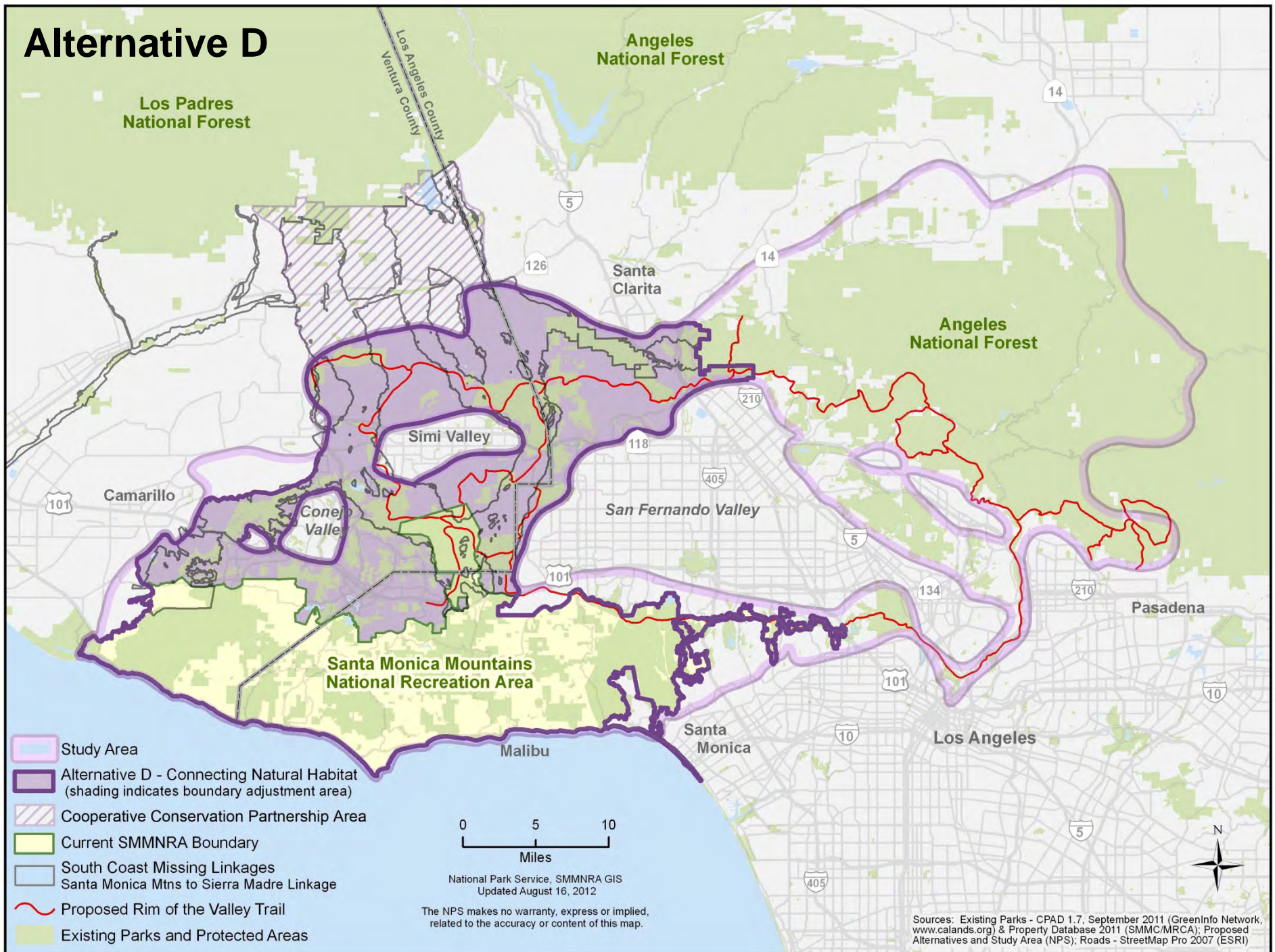
Boundary adjustment focused on including key landscape linkages and core habitat areas that connect SMMNRA, Los Padres National Forest, Angeles National Forest, and state and local habitat areas.

*With ongoing habitat loss and fragmentation in the region, as well as the threats associated with disturbances such as large scale fire, these key linkages are critical for the long term survival of the natural resources within the existing SMMNRA.*





# Alternative D





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## Next steps

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Public review & comment through January 7, 2013

- We'd like to hear from you about:
  - preferences
  - corrections
  - ideas
  - details
- Prepare draft study report – with revised and detailed analysis and alternatives
- Publish draft study report – 2014
- Final report / transmittal to Congress, will include NPS determination of  
“*most effective and efficient alternative*” – 2014





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## Questions?

